MUTINY

A PAPER OF
ANARCHISTIC IDEAS
& ACTIONS

#55 October 2010

FREE ZINE

&

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Cut out the white sections and spray paint on cop cars

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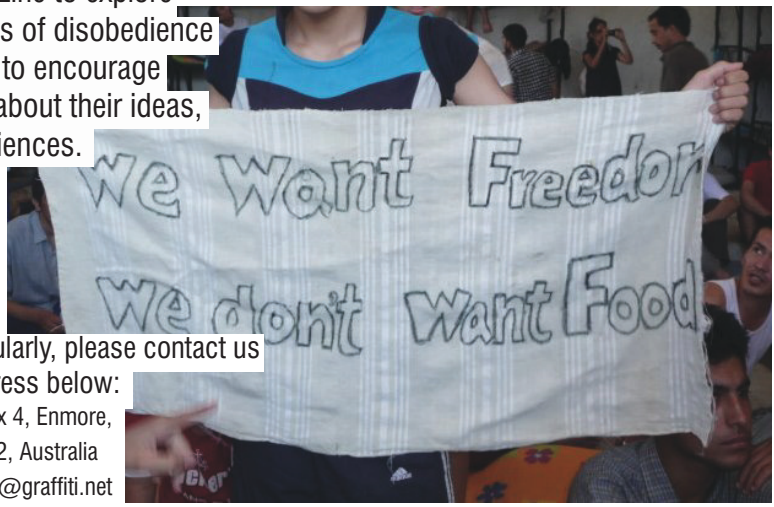
Mutiny is an anarchist collective based in Sydney. We started this zine to explore different avenues of disobedience & resistance, & to encourage people to write about their ideas, actions & experiences.



We meet regularly, please contact us on the address below:

mail: c/- PO Box 4, Enmore, NSW 2042, Australia
email mutineers@graffiti.net
web: back issues at www.jura.org.au/mutiny

Editors for this month: L Dog, Cynical Smurf, Brassy F Gnoll, Szyzgy, Mambutu Nizwa, Phoenix & Dumpstered Twin

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BRIEF NEWS

Newtown, Sydney:

On Sunday, September 19th, Newtown square was occupied by anarchists, anti-authoritarians, antifascists and people in solidarity to make a demonstration against the Sydney Fascist Forum to happen that weekend down the road in Tempe. The 9th ever forum is the biggest gathering of fascists in Australia and comes in the context of a fascist group, the Australian Protectionist Party recently coming to the area to promote themselves and to hand out flyers in Newtown under the 'I Have a Dream Mural'. Fascists have also insidiously taken control of the Humanist Society and their building over in Chippendale. The occupation on the 19th saw texts distributed and banners hung around reading "NO BORDERS", "NO NATIONS", "SOLIDARITY IS OUR WEAPON, WAR AGAINST THE WAR OF THE BOSSES", and "NO COMPROMISE WITH FASCISM". Cops immediately tried to stop people gathering in the square, threatening arrests for swearing, hindering police, playing amplified music, obstructing the footpath, sitting in a tree, and gathering in public without a permit and using a sound system; and one banner was stolen. Police also told the passersby that the occupiers were violent but when the public opinion started to overwhelmingly turn against the police they backed off. For hours a whole squad of police remained right in front trying to intimidate the demonstrators to leave. Xeroxed police files were also brought down to the square where police compared photos, and made menacing remarks using the demonstrators' names in an effort to further harass and intimidate people.

Newcastle, Australia:

On Sunday, 26th September, climate activists closed down the three coal export terminals at Newcastle harbour, the world's largest coal export port, stopping all production and loading. The action started pre-dawn with a team of eight activists entering the three coal terminals with climbing equipment and abseiling down structural cables that suspend the coal loaders over the coal ships, effectively stopping the use of this equipment due to safety requirements.

On one gantry activists suspended by ropes from the structural cables unfurled two banners saying "Coal export fuels global warming" and another "freak fires". At 8.30am another thirty six people entered the coal terminals and locked on to ancillary equipment and unfurled banners. All shipping operations at the three terminals operated by Port Waratah Coal Services were shut down by port authorities and police. By mid-afternoon on Sunday police had cut free two activists hanging from cables on a coal loader gantry and had arrested them. Activists called for an immediate moratorium on the expansion of the coal industry and support for the expansion of the renewables industry in the context of worldwide climate-change-related weather disasters that have killed thousands this year. Newcastle exports over 90 million tonnes of coal per annum, making it the world's biggest coal port, and exports are expected to more than double when current export expansions are implemented. The industry is dominated by transnational mining corporations BHPBilliton, Xstrata, and Rio Tinto.

Aotearoa/New Zealand:

Actors Equity, the NZ actors union have 'blacked' Peter Jackson's latest film The Hobbit, after the producers refused to enter into union - negotiated contracts. 'Blacking' means that the actors refuse to work on a particular project. In a gesture of solidarity, unions like the Australian Media, Entertainment & Arts Alliance, the International Federation of Actors, the UK Actors Equity have also called for a boycott of the film.

According to the Aotearoa Workers Solidarity Movement, the refusal to negotiate with unions continued the appalling record of work conditions on Jackson's films. During the Lord of the Rings films "it was common to work ridiculous hours of about

10 to 14 hours per day ... Film workers were known disparagingly (and in racist fashion) by Americans who were working on the set as 'Mexicans with cellphones' because they could be instantly hired for very little money."

It remains unclear whether The Hobbit will be made in NZ. Over the last week, the conservative NZ government has attempted, so far unsuccessfully, to intervene to resolve the dispute.

More detailed analysis is available from the Aotearoa Workers Solidarity Movement: http://awsm.org.nz/

Spain:

September 29, Spanish workers disrupted transport and television broadcasts in the first general strike in eight years as demonstrators marched in a dozen European cities against austerity measures imposed by the government on the working class to pay for the failings of capitalism. There is no doubt about the reasons to strike. Politicians and employers make us mad. First they fired as many people as they could while taking a lot of public money in aid to banks and companies until unemployment reached almost five million people. When they already couldn't fire anybody else, they started to decrease salaries for workers in the public and private sectors. Now they have not only imposed another reform making it easier to dismiss people; but they want to increase the retirement age, privatise health care, impose consumer taxes, reduce pension & unemployment benefits, and the introduction of more obstacles to worker organising. Militant sectors of the union movement in Spain have been calling for a general strike for the past two years, but the strike was eventually called by the big unions Comisiones Obreras (CCOO) and the Unión General de Trabajadores (UGT). Faced with so much abuse, a one-day strike (more of a symbolic day of work stoppage) arrives late and in the wrong way. CCOO and the UGT decided to call the strike only when only when the government had decided to dispense with them at the negotiating table. For them, the sole purpose of this one-day strike is to try to maintain their monopoly on official (but not real) representation of the workers.

72 percent of workers joined the strike, including 65 percent in the energy sector, 82 percent in the airline industry &almost 100 percent of auto workers joining the walkout. 500,000 turning out in Madrid and 400,000 in Barcelona. Hundreds of people joined hands outside Madrid's stock exchange building chanting, "thieves, robbers, speculators." whilst doors to many empty office buildings were glued shut. In Getafe, a town outside Madrid, a police officer fired shots into the air to disperse protesters outside a factory and there were many arrests made by police across the country. In central Barcelona, protesters burned a police car and blocked streets with rubbish containers, in Mallorca fibre-optic cable was sabotaged. Flights were cancelled, produce shipments were halted and the demand for electricity dropped by twenty percent compared to any normal day. Public transport ran at the minimum 25 percent of normal capacity. Mass participation in the strike was observed across the country, for example in food markets in Madrid, Barcelona, Valencia, Valladolid, Seville and Zaragoza; car factories; petro-chemical and steel factories and plants; the minerals sector, gas distribution, public services such as waste disposal and post offices; large-scale construction; port workers in Barcelona, Valencia, Algeciras and workers in audio-visual communications. Police brutality led to several arrests and dozens of workers being injured, some of whom (CGT members) were held without charge. Despite the many thousands of protests that happened all over Spain that day, the government is still pushing through it's proposed economic cuts.

Amsterdam:

Amsterdam squatters rioted on Saturday October 2, in response to a new law that bans squatting in the city which came into effect on October 1. Amsterdam has

a rich history of squatting with about 20,000 squatters in the 1980s, though this has decreased to around 1500. Around 1000 people took place in an initial demonstration, which turned into a 3 hour long riot. After mounted police charged the protestors, they were repulsed with fireworks, bricks and bottles. The confrontation spilled over into the rest of the city and luxury cars were smashed. Later in the evening molotov cocktails were thrown at a police station. 11 people were arrested, all of whom have been released. One person was badly beaten by the cops, and his skull was fractured.

Marolles, Brussels:

50 people stormed the Marolles Police station at 10pm on Friday 1st October, hurling rocks, as soon as the last police officer left the building. Windows and police cars were damaged, and two police officers were injured. The group fled, but 5 people were caught and face up to 10 years in jail, charged with conspiracy, assault and battery with intent.

The attack followed a demonstration earlier in the evening against detention centres and the deportation of undocumented foreigners, where police arrested 130 protesters.

Bugalagrande, Valle of Cauca, Colombia:

On Saturday, 25 September, members of SINALTRAINAL (Agro-industry National Union of Colombia) received death threats in Bugalagrande, Valle of Cauca, Colombia. The BLACK EAGLES (aguilas negras, a paramilitary death squad) threatened with death Javier Correa, Edgar Paez, Fabio Olaya, Jairo Mendez, Rafael Esquivel and Martin Agudelo. Some of these unionists, members of the SINALTRAINAL Executive, have Security Measures granted to them by the Inter-American Commission on Human Rights. This link shows the letter sent by the death squad Black Eagles. http://www.sinaltrainal.org/images/stories/campo1/amenaza.jpg

The death threats appeared in the context of the unionists organizing a day of protest in all the Nestle factories in Colombia (Valledupar, Mosquera, Dosquebradas and Bugalagrande), in commemoration of the fifth anniversary of the assassination of Luciano Enrique Romero Molina in Valledupar on September 11th, 2005. Luciano was a SINALTRAINAL leader and Nestle worker.

This is not the first time that SINALTRAINAL leaders that work in Nestle, Coca Cola and other companies received death threats. The National Executive of SINALTRINAL have asked for solidarity from Australia, especially from the Solidarity delegation who visited last July, 'to disseminate this information on all levels as possible, in order to protect and safeguard the lives of our comrades and our union.'

Gaza Strip, Palestine:

3 people were killed by Israeli tank shells in Beit Hannoun, in the far north of the Gaza Strip on Saturday September 11, when Israeli occupation forces invaded the area. 91 yr old Ibrahim Abu Sayed, his 17 yr old grandson Hossam, and Hossam's best friend, Ismail Abu Oda, 16 yrs, were checking on the family sheep 700m from the Green Line, when Israeli tanks fired upon them, killing them instantly.

A few days later, a demonstration of 20 people marched to the same area, to protest against the deaths and to reinhabit their lands. They started filling in large ditches made by the Israeli tanks, when Israeli soldiers opened fire with live ammunition, forcing them to retreat.

At another protest on 26th September, 20 year old Sliman Abu Hanza was left in a critical condition as he was shot in the abdomen by an explode-on-impact "dum dum" bullet by Israeli soldiers. The 200-strong demonstration entered the Israeli-imposed "buffer zone" and approached the fence marking the Green Line in Al Faraheen, a village in Khan Younis. Sliman was shot when he and a friend planted a flag near the fence. The demonstration was one of 3 that day in the "buffer zone" around the Gaza Strip.

No Borders in Action

When the edges of Australia's regime of border protection start to fray they are usually burst open through the militancy of the detainees held inside detention centres. This is the recent history of detention centres, and it also underlines the reality of all struggle, but especially that around borders - that people's agency and capacity to struggle around their material conditions, and against the removal of control and dignity from their lives is the beginning point of the most powerful resistance. For those of us outside the detention centres the struggle is in the practice of active solidarity with those inside to ensure this resistance does not lose momentum.

Things have erupted in detention centres over the past couple of months. There was the 3 day riot in Darwin detention centre, that did $400 000 worth of damage. There was the Darwin breakout, where 92 people broke out of the detention centre to stage a protest – actively denying the invisibility that the border protection regime had imposed on them. There have been hunger strikes in detention centres all over the country, which have mostly not been making it to the mass media. And then on 20th September, Josefa Rauluni jumped to his death from a roof at Villawood, rather than be deported. His suicide sparked others to action. Immediately a large-scale hungerstrike started in Villawood, to honour his death. Then 11 men who were also facing deportation took to the roof, insisting that they too would jump if their cases weren't revisited by UNHCR. They stayed on the roof, with no food or water, for over 30 hours. They offered to come down, unconditionally, if the Department of Immigration and Citizenship (DIAC) would negotiate with an independent negotiation team. DIAC said no. They finally negotiated their way down some hours later, when UNHCR negotiators turned up, and they were promised their cases would be looked at again, and that they would not be put into Stage 1 (high security) if they came down. (Of course, they're all now in Stage 1). The next day, another 9 detainees got up onto a roof, again threatening to jump. Again, DIAC officials let them stay up on the roof for two days, until their deadline to jump had come, to negotiate with them.

The response by people outside to what was going on in Villawood was also fairly significant as a realisation seemed to occur that our actions must reflect the urgency of the situation inside. On a number of consecutive days, people gathered at Villawood to hold demonstrations in solidarity with those inside, using banners, drums and chants to make sure the detainees could see and hear them. There was also a group of anarchists and anti-authoritarians who occupied and locked on in the foyer of the Department of Immigration, to show immediate solidarity as well as attempt to directly affect what was happening. At about the time folk at Villawood started negotiations with UNHCR, police moved in to arrest the 2 people locked on. There was also a further demonstration in a public square in Newtown during peak hour with folk there hanging banners and handing out flyers.

These moments to take action, whether as an act of solidarity or a chance to attack the state, cannot always be easily measured and their beauty and effectiveness are often enhanced by their spontaneity. In the face of myriad levels of state coercion and repression, overthinking every action will often lead to a sense of defeatism instead of a feeling of open possibilities. Certainly in terms of struggle against these prisons that migrants are locked away in, it has been a long while since urgent, militant direct action has been a part of how solidarity is enacted outside. However, this is a crucial element that we must build in order to raise the level of solidarity with those struggling inside beyond pleading passively to some higher authority to be more humane. We need to find strategic roofs and offices to occupy; roads to shutdown; business to disrupt, when people in detention centres start to agitate.

Almost contradictorily however, it is the urgency to constantly respond that can lead us down paths that replace a revolutionary no borders politic with the dead end that is liberal humanitarianism. The immediate desire to always respond, knowing lives are at stake just here, certainly can create powerful actions, but can also impede our grasp of how border protection cannot be removed from capital and broader systems of control and repression and therefore impede our capacity to act in a revolutionary manner.

Responding out of anger and outrage at what's going on isn't in itself the problem, but as we get stuck in these cycles it has seemed inevitable that liberal, reformist demands begin to replace the original revolutionary energy. We have seen this in the movement against mandatory detention that occurred when the Liberals under John Howard were in government in the first half of this decade. Liberal humanitarianism is a dire substitute for the practice of militant, active, and engaged solidarity. If it is possible to take a breath, take stock and pay some attention to lessons that reside in a common history of struggle from the last time there was 'refugee' movement, we can see that despite the positives of a much-claimed victory – children out of detention, the closing down of some detention centres, the ending of TPV's – the movement increasingly receded into reformist liberalism instead of struggling against the nature and very existence of borders and border protection. As a result, it should be no surprise that a few years later under a new government the 'toughening up' of border protection has once again become a major issue with very real consequences.

What has been really heartening, is that the recent actions by those on the outside have felt like actions of real solidarity. Inspired by the actions of those who are imprisoned in the detention centres, it seems like there has been none of the self-sacrificing, humanitarian response of having to "save the refugees". Sitting outside Villawood for hours after the deadline for negotiations had passed, waiting, chanting occasionally to let the folks on the roof know we were still there – was a situation that had no hope of "rescue". Instead it was the solidarity of sitting with those on the roof, of not leaving till they came down safe, and when they did come down to cheer like crazy, everyone so relieved they were still alive, and triumphant in forcing DIAC into negotiations that they wouldn't have otherwise had.

Another great thing about the protests in late September was that there was no distinction in active responses from the outside, between those in detention who had applied for asylum, and those who had been locked up after their visas had expired. This is often a huge problem in leftist refugee politics – where it's only those who "are genuine refugees" who deserve support.

This assumption that somehow the state is legitimate in controlling the movement of people, and locking them up and/or sending them halfway across the world for the slightest transgression of its arbitrary protocols, is simply the logical follow-on of "We will decide who comes to this country and the circumstances in which they come"; it's just part of the same process.

What mostly affected the outside responses to the second roof protest was burnout. While up to 200 people turned up to Villawood on the second day of the first rooftop protest, numbers fell dramatically after that. And whereas large numbers of local residents came out to show support for the first rooftop protest, for the second, a lot of those in the streets were there, not in solidarity, but much more voyeuristically – cameras ready in case anyone jumped. After two full days of coordinating responses to the first protest, it was only a few who had the stamina to continue responding for another two days. This is a huge factor in all kinds of revolutionary politics, and one that needs to be taken seriously. One way that this seems to have been ameliorated somewhat in recent activity, has been the existence of different groups, some spontaneous, taking up the action they believed appropriate.

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A world without borders can seem as far off as a revolutionary society - in fact further as the latter can exist without the former, but the former without the latter seems impossible. These are things that seem distant, but the choice to struggle for them is a combination of desire and survival - we cannot accept that capitalism and border protection can do anything remotely like create a world we want or can afford to live in.

The cognitive gap between the liberal humanitarian, 'saviour' response to the refugee issue and the revolutionary vision of a world without borders can seem unbreachable. But this is only an issue if we think No Borders politics can be practised as a single issue - that it is an idea that can only be taken up as part of this movement against the detention of asylum seekers. To attack this regime of border protection is to attack a core element in the functioning of global capitalism and its capacity to police our lives and restrict our movements everywhere – from those trying to cross international borders, to how we take up and use space in our cities and neighbourhoods, to how our working lives (whether employed or unemployed) are closely controlled.

The building of active, revolutionary solidarity across a range of sites of struggle and contestation is necessary in the practice of No Borders politics. This does not need to occur only in front of detention centres or at the Department of Immigration. We can also take these politics into our neighbourhoods, in supporting the struggles of migrant workers and international students. In making anti-racist practice an ordinary part of the everyday. No borders politics are part of a much larger struggle for liberation that demands the tearing down of detention centers and the ending of the violently racist system of borders.

by Sour Dough & Cynical Smurf

No Border camp Brussels

By Princess Mob

In April this year activists found a mass grave in Greece. Hidden in inaccessible terrain near the village of Sideró and marked only by a bullet-ridden sign saying “the cemetery of the illegal immigrants,” this site has been used for years to dispose of the corpses of migrants who died trying to cross the border into Greece. It is believed that between 150 and 200 people have been buried there, including 14 people who drowned trying to cross the river Evros/ Meriç on 25th of June 2010.

On Tuesday 12th of October a 46 year old man, Jimmy Mubenga, was killed by G4S security guards who assaulted him while forcing him onto a deportation flight from London to Anglola.

14,921 people died between 1988 and 2007 along Europe’s borders . That figure includes 235 migrants who were shot dead by border police, and thousands more who drowned, died under trucks or trains, or froze to death as border controls turned a simple journey into a dangerous crossing.

Along with this violence at the borders, many migrants face daily violence from police and from the increasingly bold forces of far-right racist groups.

No Borders is less an organised network than a simple statement of politics. It is an expression of solidarity with those who fight borders by crossing them and a statement against attempts by governments and ruling forces to encourage division and nationalism in the face of austerity measures and economic instability.

Previous No Border camps have been held at physical border sites, such as Calais in France and the island of Lesvos, one of the main entrance gates for thousands of refugees and migrants seeking to reach Europe.

In Brussels between September 25 and October 3, campers sought to bring the border home to the heart of Europe. Brussels is the de-facto capital of Europe, and home to key agencies in the border and security apparatus. At the same time as the camp it was also hosting the Ecofin summit, a meeting of European finance ministers and financial lobbyists.

As well as being home to much of the infrastructure of the European border regime, Brussels is home to ongoing resistance. There is a strong movement of sans papiers (undocumented migrants) which has involved mass occupations and hunger strikes. On 24 August 2008 two of the three wings of the Steenokkerzeel immigration prison were burnt to the ground. The camp was connected to this resistance through a number of events held at the Gesu monastary, a squat which has been evicted and re-occupied a number of times by sans papiers and activists with papers, which is currently home to about 150 people, most of them families.

The most newsworthy aspect of the Brussels camp was the overwhelming policing and the extensive use of 'adminstrative detention', or preventative arrest. As at the COP15 counter-mobilisation in Copenhagen last year, hundreds of people were detained in an attempt to prevent them from taking action. Over the weekend at least 500 arrests were made, nearly all 'preventative'. 14 people were seriously injured. A number of people were abused in police custody, including a number of women who were sexually assaulted and threatened with rape by police.

In other words, the violence of the border was temporarily extended to all who challenged its legitimacy. The experience of walking the streets knowing that you could, at any time, be arrested for absolutely nothing – that I knew I could be detained simply because of a police judgement about what type of person I was - can be compared to the situation of people who live without legal immigration status.

Despite police attempts there were demonstrations, actions, and discussions throughout the week.

On Wednesday about 40 activists manage to blockade a conference on immigration with a keynote speaker from Frontex. Frontex is the relatively new agency that coordinates the activities of the border police of EU member states. It has an intelligence service component, which monitors data about movements at the external borders of the EU and researches more intensive surveillence technology, including biometric identity checks at all border crossings. Recently Frontex has taken on the role of organising mass deportation charter flights.

The main event on Wednesday was a massive rally of 100,000 people called by the European trade union movement against the Ecofin meeting and the Europe-wide government push towards austerity. The No Borders camp had been invited by some local unionists to be part of a 'critical/anticapitalist' bloc as part of this rally but police had indicated that we would not be permitted to march. Hundreds of people from the camp were arrested as they tried to make their way to the demo and more were arrested at the meeting point.

A bloc of about 150 people managed to join the demo. Worried about being left vulnerable at the end of the march, they were invited by the metal workers' union to walk behind them. However the anarchist slogans disturbed the next union in line, the Polish trade union Solidarnosc, so much that they refused to march behind the anticapitalist bloc. This gave the police the opportunity to kettle, beat, and arrest much of the bloc. The unions that saw this happening were divided in their response: some expressed solidarity against the police, while others walked straight past, intent on continuing the ritual of their march. All up, 350 people were arrested over the day.

Despite the repression, several other actions took place over the week. There were anti-Frontex banners and flyering at the airport, Frontex windows and doors were smashed and smoke bombs let off, locks were glued at the International Organisation for Migration (IOM). A building of Sodexho - the French hotel and catering company with a 50% share in Corrections Corporation of Australia and UK Detention Services - had windows smashed, and oil was spilled over another Sodexho building. Steria, the company that designed the Eurodac fingerprinting database - leading to thousands of migrants a year being

deported - had its windows smashed and "Smash Eurodac" spray-painted across it. The Italian Embassy had excrement thrown over it. Ticket machines were destroyed in three metro stations as an action against the transport company STIB, which participates in the roundup of sans papiers. The buildings of CarlsonWagonLit and Randstatd, which participate in deportations, were damaged. The famous Brussels landmark "mannekin piss" (a small statue of a boy pissing) was given a new set of No Border clothes.

During the mass arrests, the holding cells suffered a lot of damage and three activists who had been abused in detention bravely disrupted a police recruitment fair.

While the police tactics failed to stop actions happening, or to prevent people gathering and publicly showing their opposition, they did mean that no mass militancy was possible. An unpermitted demonstration called for the Friday evening,"against detention centres; against all prisons; against borders, against the state" consisted mainly of about 150 people being arrested in small groups as they tried to gather. Later in the night 30 people attacked a police station, breaking windows and doors, letting off smoke bombs and starting a fire. At the time of writing, four people are still being held in detention for alleged participation in this attack (http://bxl.indymedia.org/articles/211).

The last Saturday of the camp saw a negotiated demonstration in which over 1500 people took to the streets of Brussels without police trouble. While a permitted street parade isn't normally my favourite type of action, this one did feel significant. Many of us from the camp had spent much of the week feeling under seige. If we left the camp we did so in hiding, in small groups, doing our best to blend in to the city. To be out, publicly proclaiming our politics, and to be joined by a thousand other people, was a celebration of solidarity. Most of those who had papers chose not to carry them in solidarity with sans papiers who joined the demonstration.

There were reports that in the lead up to this demonstration the police put the suburb of Molenbeek, a working-class migrant neighbourhood, under seige and blocked off all streets leading to the demonstration route to keep young people from this neighbourhood from joining the demo. This imperative to keep the No Borders activists separate from other popular movements can also be seen in the repression of the No Borders bloc in the trade union demonstration of Wednesday. It could be seen in the heavy policing of the streets around the Gesu monastery. To some extent all of this worked to prevent potential connections. However, connections were made through workshops, exhibitions, concerts, and parties at Gesu and other sites, despite and around the police efforts. As one reflection posted on Indymedia says "The police clampdown undoubtedly succeeded in scaring many undocumented people away from the camp; though on the other hand, as we've seen in Calais, if anything brings people from different backgrounds together it is a shared experience of repression and building resistance." (http://brussels.indymedia.org/articles/358).

Against Capital; Against Work

Anthony Hayes

In *Mutiny # 51* Lindsay Hawkins wrote a piece called 'Radical Unionism' which was a response to my article 'Pro-revolutionaries and trade unions' in *Mutiny # 49*. Against the general line of my article he wrote 'that unions have revolutionary potential and that workers should not automatically reject involvement in trade union activity.' In particular Lindsay proposes the Workers Solidarity Network as a possible practice to the end of 'radical unionism.'

I certainly wrote that 'I have argued that comrades should not be involved in trade unions.' I do argue such and I continue to. But as we know context is everything, and the context in this case is what I wrote *immediately* after this quotation:

> *We should not view trade unions as examples of working class self-organisation against capital. Rather trade unions are emblematic of one way that capital organises labour – obviously there are other ways that capital organises labour from more 'democratic' methods right through to terroristic and dictatorial methods. In essence my point was to clarify that working class self-organisation against capital and trade unions are not synonymous.*

Perhaps I should have been clearer in my earlier piece. Rather than writing 'comrades should not be involved in trade unions' I should have written 'comrades involved in trade unions will find they cannot act in a pro-revolutionary fashion unless they directly confront the pro-capitalist nature of trade unionism.' And here is the real essence of my argument. I am not opposed to, nor would I suggest that we should not struggle for a better deal in regards to the rate which capitalists exploit our labour-power. However the transformation of such struggles over the rate of exploitation, struggles that necessarily accept the capitalist logic of this exploitation, will necessitate a break with such struggles. This was the point of quoting Marx:

> *Instead of the conservative motto, "A fair day's wage for a fair day's work!" they ought to inscribe on their banner the revolutionary watchword, "Abolition of the wages system!"*

Marx was clear that a break from merely economic struggles was required for struggles to become revolutionary. And we should remember that in 1865 when he was writing, working class self-organisation had not been formalised in relation to individual capitalists and the state to the extent to which it has been since. One needs only to conjure the Accord process presided over by the ACTU in the 1980s and 90s to understand what I mean by such a formalisation.

The only way revolutionaries can engage with trade unions is negatively. This is not a call for an all out war with trade unions and their supposed compromised leadership. Rather, it is a call for patient and considered work, necessarily theoretical and practical, which

attempts to demonstrate on the one hand the limitations of trade unions, and on the other hand, why workers need to go beyond trade union organisation, and ultimately capitalist work itself, in order to be finally done with the see-saw of class struggle.

In order to understand this better we need to grapple with the history and development of trade unions. In his article Lindsay writes that trade unions have a revolutionary history and a revolutionary potential. However by emphasising a spurious revolutionary history of trade unions he misses and obscures the real object of such a history: *those people that have carried out revolutionary struggles against their reduction to being mere working class material for capital*. And if there is a central point to my argument then it is this. As I wrote in my earlier Mutiny piece: 'my point was to clarify that *working class self-organisation against capital* and *trade unions* are not synonymous.' And it is this point that Lindsay fails to engage with as he conflates trade union struggles with self-conscious struggles against capitalist society. Our mistake would be to go on pretending that a project of emancipation can be based upon *radicalising* economic struggles for bigger cages with golden bars. This is something Marx clearly understood when he wrote 150 years ago, 'to clamour for *equal or even equitable retribution* on the basis of the wages system is the same as to clamour for *freedom* on the basis of the slavery system.'

This is not to suggest that we either struggle for better wages and conditions *or* we struggle for the overthrow of capital and wage-slavery. That would be to pose a false dichotomy. Rather, in organising and fighting for better wages and conditions we need to clearly demonstrate the limitations of such struggles and why we need to move beyond this horizon.

The *revolutionary significanc*e of economic struggles is precisely not their apparent content: wages and conditions. And this is not to denigrate the struggles we fight in order to get access to a wage and more humane conditions at work. Rather it is to point out that the real gain of such struggles is the creation and experience of new needs that point beyond particular wage struggles. We create bonds of solidarity with other people. Such a perspective that looks beyond capital and beyond wage slavery is in danger of being lost by Lindsay when he writes of 'our unions' and 'our allegiance [...] to our class.' What is 'our' class? To be a wage-slave is not something to be proud of; rather it is a misery. It is through our resistance to being reduced to mere working class material for capital that we open up possibilities beyond wage-slavery. It is through our struggles against the artificially imposed need to sell our ability to work that we begin to understand and create the conditions for lives beyond wage-slavery. Thus any dignity we gain is not through simply identifying ourselves as working class; rather it is in and through the communities of solidarity that we help to create when we struggle against our atomisation and reduction to mere labour-power for sale.

Productive activity in contemporary capitalist societies is work which produces a commodity—whether a thing or a service—that is sold for a profit. Capitalist work, through the complexity of its various fragmentary divisions, hierarchical organisation and bureaucratic management, is the result of the vast class struggles fought over the last few centuries; class struggles waged by the early capitalist class to convert and destroy older forms of productive activity in order to fashion a peculiarly capitalist version of work organised around commodity production. Today there is no essentially life-affirming productive activity hidden behind the mask of wage labour, there is just work; a planet organised around the artificial 'need' for a wage and market relations. If there is something to be celebrated amongst all of this it is those practices which we develop in order to resist the conversion of all of life into work for capital; whether producing or consuming commodities. It is this world of work that we need to liberate ourselves from.

Trade unions originated in the struggle over the regulation of the working day—that is the struggle over the rate of exploitation and the wages received for this exploitation. Because trade unions originated in the struggle of people to just simply live on the terms given them by the capitalist organisation of life, trade unions have been shaped and determined overwhelmingly by capitalist society. And it is this tendency to limit working class struggle to merely negotiating the terms of its exploitation under capital that has driven workers to confront unions time and again—even and especially when these struggles have begun as union struggles.

When Lindsay cites the IWW around the First World War, the Spanish CNT of 1936-39 and the NSW BLF in the 1970s as examples of revolutionary trade unionism, he fails to provide either a historical context for their practices—e.g. the heightened class struggle in the societies of those times—or the actual limits of trade unionism that these workers and organisations came up against. To cite only one of the more glaring instances, the NSW BLF met one of these limits in the form of the federal leadership of the union under Norm Gallagher cooperating with the Australian state in order to undermine and smash what was considered a rogue branch.

Undoubtedly any move toward organising independently of trade unions, the state and capital should be encouraged and pushed. Here Lindsay and I can agree that the formation of a Workers Solidarity Network is a good thing. Where we differ is in how best to push forward such autonomous organising. Without clear arguments that, on the one hand attempt to understand the limits of struggles within capitalist society, and on the other hand demonstrate why such struggles must confront these limits, we will merely contribute to the disarming of those of us struggling for a world beyond capital and wage-labour.

REVIEW: TOMORROW WHEN THE WAR BEGAN

BY L. DOG

I really enjoyed seeing this film adaptation of John Marsden's famous teen novel, probably because it reminded me of being twelve and flipping through the book for the sexy bits. The movie, which like the book, is about a group of young folks fighting an invading army in rural Australia, sadly has no sexy bits but I think there are some interesting observations we can make about race, gender, and violence in the film.

In Marsden's novels the nationality of the invading army is unspecified, but in the film they all look Asian. The representation of the invaders as Asian in the film was really disappointing. Like, why not make them all different ethnicities, or even better, all white, like some invading white supremacist bigot army. You might say that the movie avoids being completely problematically racist because Lee, an Asian-Australian kid whose family owns a Chinese restaurant in town (yeah he's the only working class character), is one of the main characters fighting against the invasion. But I'm not sure about that. However, there is this great bit where Ellie is crouched against a wall hiding from the baddies and notices a mural depicting Cook's landing in 1788.
It's a real poignant moment which I feel like is screaming to the audience, 'THAT'S RIGHT, THAT WAS AN INVASION PEOPLE'. Fuck yeah.

In terms of gender politics the young women in the group are definitely the most badass. Ellie is the tough-talking, Molotov-throwing, leader who is smarter and sassier than the boys, and better at driving trucks. At one point Kevin, the typical male 'jock' character, runs away from Ellie and her friend, leaving them at risk. But rather than the film saying 'it's okay for men to be scared' it just ended up making Kevin into a bit of an unsympathetic dickhead.

Questions of violence and strategy are dealt with thoughtfully. I've been told that the books have been banned from school curricula because they supposedly incite terrorist activity. Hmm, well that's friggin' ridiculous. So yeah, it would be heaps better if this film was about a group of rad teens fighting a white supremacist takeover or, y'know, capitalism, but it's not. It does however suggest that women can be badass rebel fighters and that a small group of (young) people can fight against something that's 'wrong'; unfortunately in this film the bad guys are an Asian invading army which just plays into all kinds of racist white Australian bullshit.

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CONFERENCE:
10TH TO 12TH DECEMBER,
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In this month's Mutiny Zine...

★SourDough and Cynical Smurf talk about the recent actions in solidarity withVillawood protestors.

★Princess Mob reports back on the no borders camp in Brussels.

★Anthony Hayes responds to Lindsay Hawkins' article in Mutiny #51 in 'Against Capital, Against Work'.

Upcoming Events

Saturday October 23, Stand up for Refugees, 1pm, Town Hall. Nine years after the Siev X tragedy, demand the close of all detention centres, no offshore processing, no deportations.

Sunday October 24, film screening 'Our Generation', 5:30pm at Black Rose Books, 22 Enmore Rd, $5 suggested donation. A powerful journey into Australia's indigenous relations from colonisation until the present day.

F**riday October 29**, Rally for 'Jobs with Justice'! Stop the NT intervention!, 12 noon, Town Hall. Organised by Stop the Intervention Collective Sydney. Stoptheintervention.org

Friday October 29, Reclaim the Night, 6pm, Town Hall. Annual rally to protest against violence against women in all its forms. www.reclaimthenight2010.wordpress.com

Saturday October 30, film screening and discussion 'Czech Dream', 2pm at Jura Books, 440 Parramatta Rd, Petersham. Documentary film which records a large-scale hoax, culminating in the "opening event" of a fake hypermarket.

Sunday October 31, Workers Solidarity Network meeting, 2pm at Jura Books.
The WSN, a rank and file militant group, looking to provide solidarity to workers engaged in industrial action/disputes, meets on the last Sunday of each month at Jura books.

Friday, December 10- Sunday December 12, Conference- Breakout: For the Free movement of people, Redfern Community Centre, begins 5.30pm on Friday.
Breakout conference aims to create a space where opposition to Australia's border protection regime can again transform into a movement. www.breakoutconference.org

Regular events @ Black Rose:

Saturdays from 5pm: Open Self-Organised C.A.F.E. Fuck the commercial venues! Relax with comrades.Hang out, drinks, snacks, music, games and more.

Wednesdays from 4pm (cooking; serving from 7pm): The Peoples Kitchen, free vegan community dinner... RESIST THE CAPITALIST DIET!